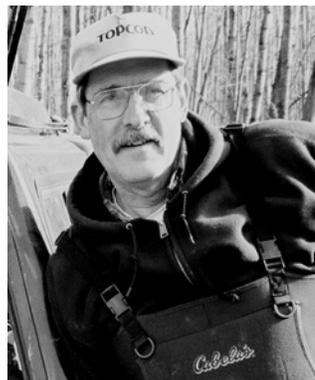


# Chairman's Update



## Conservation Chronicle



By Edgar Harvey, Jr.

Last March, the Big Game Committee of the Conservation Congress recommended that earn-a-buck be suspended for the 2009 deer season. The history of deer management, and deer hunting in Wisconsin, has followed the recommendations of the Conservation Congress foot step by foot step since that time. The members of our Big Game Committee, and the newly formed Ad-Hoc Deer 2000 Review Committee should feel that they have

made a huge difference. So should all Congress delegates. We have led.

On November 6, our Ad-Hoc Deer 2000 Review Committee reviewed the input from the eleven hearings, which were held around the state regarding the proposed earn-a-buck alternative rule. They concluded that none of the proposals which were presented at the hearings (including their own) were ready for prime time. Convinced that current deer population levels are low enough that another year without a herd reduction program will not create a problem, they recommended that the earn-a-buck moratorium be extended another year. We issued a press release in advance of the 2009 gun deer season opener.

The gun season has since come and gone. Although the suspension of earn-a-buck should have resulted in an exaggerated buck harvest com-

pared to recent years, the buck harvest was the lowest in nearly three decades. The light harvest caused Secretary Frank to conclude that the Congress' recommended action is the most appropriate action. He has not closed the door on putting a herd reduction program in place before the 2010 season should a unit by unit examination over the next few months show that such measures are called for. However, while the SAK may indicate high deer densities, all other indicators suggest that this will not be the case.

Secretary Frank, and his staff, must be given a great deal of credit for their willingness to listen to the Congress and to work with us. Much of the Congress' success depends on the value that the people we work with place on the Congress.

*Continued on Page 3...*

## 2010 Congress Spring Hearing Advisory Questions

By Kurt Thiede, WCC DNR Liaison

STEVENS POINT – The Wisconsin Conservation Congress Executive Council advanced thirty-eight advisory questions to the annual Spring Hearing questionnaire.

Up slightly from last year's

count of thirty-five questions, this year's advisory questions will feature questions ranging from the use of lead terminal fishing tackle to lowering the age at which a hunter can choose to use a crossbow.

"I don't believe we have any issue as divisive as feral cats, but we do have a diverse

collection of questions that any hunter, angler or trapper should find interesting and important to their specific interest," stated Ed Harvey, WCC Chairman.

This year's Congress portion of the April 12, 2010

*Continued on Page 7...*

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### Special points of interest:

- WCC District Meetings March 2– 15, 2010
- WCC Award Nominations Due March 1, 2010
- WCC Youth Expo Travel Grant Application Due April 16, 2010
- WCC Learn-to-Hunt Bear Applications Due April 21, 2010
- 2010 Spring Hearings Monday, April 12, 7pm

# 2009 Youth Hunters: Luke's Bear

By Kurt Thiede, DNR WCC Liaison

**BAYFIELD COUNTY** - Luke Oxtoby, 13, his father and WCC delegate from Bayfield County, Lee Wiesner sat together in the ground blind that Lee constructed waiting for a bear to approach the bait.

The reason Luke and his father were sitting in the blind at all was due to in part to his own interest in bear hunting, but also to the generosity of Mr. John Griedel, and the efforts of Lee Wiesner.

On April 21, 2009, Luke responded with an application for the WCC Learn-to-Bear Hunt tag.

"I would like to receive [the tag] for many reasons," wrote Luke. "The first reason is that I think it would be extremely fun to hunt a bear. Another reason I would like to hunt bear is that my dad would have fun too."

Luke wrote a very good essay, but so did the winner of the Congress' tag, Jackson Humphries. Luke was the runner up, and when Rich Kirchmeyer, WCC Secretary, contacted him, he was disappointed, but said he'd try again next year...well, he didn't have to wait.

About two months after Luke was notified that he was not selected for the Congress' tag, he received another call from Rich Kirchmeyer.

Rich told Luke that unexpectedly a gentleman named John Griedel had offered up his tag to the WCC. If the WCC had a young hunter that was interested, he would



Luke and his "guide and new friend" Lee Wiesner, delegate from Bayfield County, and Luke's first bear.

be willing to transfer his tag. Luke was that young hunter, and the WCC agreed to pick up the cost of the license. Lee Wiesner offered to serve as the mentor to the first time bear hunter.

"Needless to say, Luke was ecstatic," recalled Rich Kirchmeyer.

As evening approached on September 16, 2009 the wind was all wrong, blowing directly from the blind towards the bait. At 4:10 PM a bear approached the bait from the north, but winded the crew about 5 feet from the bait. A second bear came into the bait from the north at about 4:45 PM but again winded them and Luke found out just how fast a bear can run. "It knocked over everything in its path," recalled Luke.

Luke confessed that he and his dad were a little discouraged about the wind, they hoped the conditions wouldn't prevent them from a chance at a bear.

Lee saw the looks of worry on their faces, he knew that they needn't be discouraged. Lee had been patterning a bear for about two weeks. Lee smiled, pointed to his watch and motioned 5:30 with his fingers.

With the accuracy of a zeroed-in rifle, sure enough, at 5:29 PM a beautiful 220 pound sow came into the bait.

"The bear sat down by the bait," remembered Luke. "It was a little bigger than the others. When it looked the other way I raised the gun and aimed."

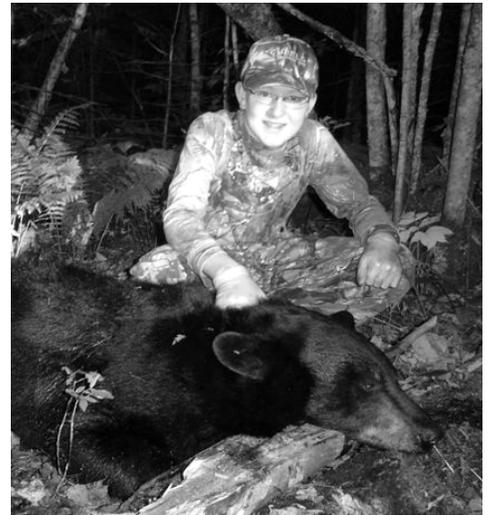
"Luke made a perfect double lung shot with my 30-06," said Lee.

"I got pretty excited after I shot," Luke reported. "It reared up and started running. After a few seconds we heard a crash."

The bear ran about 30 yards, crossed a creek and then expired.

"It was very satisfying to see the excitement on Luke's face and the expression of pride on the face of Luke's father," said Wiesner.

Luke shot his first deer during a Learn-to-Deer-Hunt program at the Sandhill Wildlife



Luke Oxtoby, 13, from Howards Grove, Sheboygan County, pictured here with his 220 pound black bear that he shot. The bear was shot opening evening, in the Town of Barnes in Bayfield County.

Area. He had so much fun that he and his dad went back to Sandhill after the deer season to enjoy the outdoors.

The Learn-to-Hunt programs foster an appreciation for the outdoors and our natural resources. The experience provides a chance for a child and a parent to develop strong bonds, and creates friendships and memories that will last forever.

What impact the generosity of Lee Wiesner, John Griedel, the Congress, and the entire experience will have on the future of young Luke Oxtoby won't be known for sometime. What we do know is how Luke felt after his hunt.

"My guide and new friend Lee was great," wrote Luke in an essay summarizing his experience. "It was a great experience I will always remember, "I feel very lucky to have been able to go on this hunt."

Regardless of the path in life Luke chooses, he has experienced important life lessons. Generosity, friendship, life and death, success and disappointment. Thank you Luke, for reminding all of us why we work so hard and do what we do, and why the future of hunting, fishing and trapping is so important to our society.



## Chairman's Update...Continued from Page 1.

These were not easy decisions. There was a great deal of pressure from both inside and outside of the department to stay the course. In Secretary Frank's words "there was blood on the floor". Secretary Frank is a butcher's kid. He knows blood on the floor when he sees it.

The public realizes the seriousness of the current situation. We need to understand this, and we need to be certain that wildlife managers, and department leadership, understand it as well. No number of excuses will be accepted.

The harvest was not short due to fog, warm weather, cold weather, snow, lack of snow, or post rut syndrome. Hunters knew that they were going to hunt on opening day, long before they knew what the weather would be like on opening morning. Weather may make hunting easier, or more difficult. But, the primary influence on the size of the harvest is the number of deer available for harvest.

Today's deer hunters are better equipped than ever before. Because they participated in the record level harvests over the past decade or so, and because hunting skills are learned through contact with target species, today's hunters are the best in Wisconsin's history. They know when to sit, when to move around, and when to drive.

Hunters are sometimes criticized as being concerned only about what is under their tree. If they don't see any deer, they are hunting in the wrong place.

The Conservation Congress has long recognized hunter access to deer as the primary obstacle to deer management. If hunters are not seeing deer where they are hunting, it is because that is where they have hunted. High deer numbers are associated with areas of little or no hunter access, and therefore limited harvest. Currently, problematically high deer densities in areas with poor hunter access are ignored. They are offset by further reducing deer densities in areas which have good hunter access within a broader geographic region to create an appropriate average density. We need to be less concerned about managing deer in areas that we are unable to manage. We need to be more concerned about

maintaining an appropriate number of deer available for public harvest in those areas where deer are accessible to hunters.

We need to better involve the public in setting goals and quotas. When I first came onto the Congress, setting quotas and permit levels was part of every spring hearing. This was, in fact, the function which the Congress was created to perform. Later, joint meetings between county Congress delegations, and the Land and Water Conservation Committee of each County Board, were held for that purpose. Those meetings have devolved into today's herd status meetings. Generally, herd status meetings which are lightly attended do provide for a level of public involvement in the process. Those that are highly attended are little more than public information meetings. Department staff put a great deal of effort into these meetings, but the perception of many hunters is that they are just not being heard.

The antidotal information which is received from the public is obviously skewed, and difficult to interpret. Successful hunters are less likely to offer comments. Comments are likely to be presented in a way which will best illustrate the individual's view. However, we should have identified the problems which we are dealing with today long before the population dropped off the way it did in 2008.

We will likely kill only about 1,000 deer in Florence County this year. That's down from 2,234 last year. In 1959, more than 3,100 deer were killed in Florence County. The department did not intentionally allow the herd to drop to this level in Florence County, or in any of the thirteen zero quota units. It happened because the SAK did not function correctly. We did not know how low the population had slipped until extraordinary measures were needed to rebuild the herd. We have no reason to suspect that this anomaly is unique to the units which had zero quotas in 2009. All indications are that it is occurring in all parts of the state. Even

in units that are being reported as grossly over goal.

We need to do whatever needs to be done to make the sex-age-kill formula work. This means research. Currently, the big research needs are to work on the buck recovery rate and fawn survival. It does not mean research into the impacts of deer on forest ecology. That is a forestry issue. It should be funded with forestry dollars. The Congress must take a lead role in finding and supporting funding for deer research. If we want our wildlife managers to do the best possible job, we have to see that they have the best possible tools.

As was the case last March, when our Big Game Committee first recommended the earn-a-buck moratorium, on November 6, the Conservation Congress led the way before all other agencies and organizations. I am certain that we will continue to lead the way as events play out over the next year.



Richard Becker, Manitowoc County Delegate, harvested this boar Alaskan Coastal Brown Bear that the guide estimated between 750 and 800 Pounds this past fall while hunting with his son Robert.

# Archery in the Schools on target

By Lee Fahrney, Vice-Chair, WCC Outdoor Heritage Committee

Why would officials from the National Archery in the Schools Program look to Wisconsin to increase the number of kids involved?

It's all about hunting traditions, according to NASP National Director Roy Grimes, who led the discussion at a workshop hosted by the Department of Natural Resources Bureau of Wildlife Management in August, 2009 in Madison.

"When we decided to expand the program, Wisconsin was a natural choice based on the strong outdoor heritage that exists here," Grimes said. "That's especially true of archery," he added.

The goal is to engage more students in the educational process to improve classroom performance and reduce drop-out rates. Educators have long understood that those who are most at risk of dropping out of school are those who are not involved in extracurricular activities.

One reason the program is a success, NASP officials say, is that archery is accessible to nearly all students, including those with disabilities. Students embrace the challenge of shooting at bulls-eye targets backed by an arrow-resistant net in their gymnasium.

NASP was originally conceived as a method of promoting and expanding the sport of archery in schools, but teachers and administrators quickly realized that the additional benefits to its participants reveal the real story behind the explosive success of the program.

The latest in archery equipment designed to fit every student is available through the program. In Wisconsin, NASP equipment has been delivered to more than 200 school districts. The equipment includes bows, arrows, targets and a 30-foot arrow resistant safety net. The setup is safe, durable and easy for the teacher and the student to learn to use.

The Madison workshop included representatives of a wide range of Wisconsin outdoor organizations, including the Wisconsin Bowhunters Association.

Association member Larrie Hazen of Mt. Hope says there is strong support for

the program within his group. "We're behind the program 100 percent," he said.

According to Hazen, WBA contributes monetarily with equipment purchases for schools while many of its members serve as certified NASP instructors. WBA boasts more than 7,000 members statewide.

Mathews, a nationally recognized Wisconsin-based bow manufacturing company, has also been a strong NASP supporter, contributing more than \$2 million in financial support over the past six years.

Kevin Stay represented Mathews Inc. at the workshop. He noted that the Mathews-produced Genesis is the official bow of NASP. Genesis bows are made available at reduced prices directly to schools, government agencies and other non-profit organizations.

Many archery organizations would like to see the program incorporated into their local school's physical education curriculum. Kevin Winkler is president of the South Central Wisconsin Archers, a group that operates a state-of-the-art archery facility in Monroe in Green County.

"So many families out there do not have a parent who is involved in the outdoors," he asserts. "It may be the only way some of these kids would get an opportunity to experience archery."

"It's something anyone can enjoy," says Winkler. "Anyone – boy, girl, athlete, non-athlete; they can all become good archers."

## DNR fills NASP position

Dan Schroeder has been named director of the NASP program within the Department of Natural Resources Bureau of Wildlife Management. He will coordinate NASP and related archery education programs in Wisconsin.

The agency looks to increase funding



The National Archery in the Schools Program has reached out to more than three million students since its inception in 2002. Here, students line up to try their hand at hitting a bulls-eye.

for the limited term position, according to Mary Kay Salwey, DNR Wildlife Education Program Administrator. She hopes to obtain additional funding through other channels. "It will take another biennium before we could implement any specially ear-marked archery license fee increases that the DNR, sportsman's groups and other members of the archery community might push through the state legislature," she said.

According to NASP officials, the program can be incorporated in the school curriculum with ease. NASP lessons were co-written by educators and archers and were designed to be compliant with core content standards at both the state and national levels.

In many cases, NASP participation offers after school activities plus the potential for involvement in local, state and national tournament competition. Disney World's Wide World of Sports hosted the first World NASP Tournament in Orlando, Florida, Oct. 8-11, 2009. The next state NASP tournament will be held on March 26-27 at the Wisconsin Rapids Fieldhouse.

Roy Grimes and a group of like-minded archers founded the National Archery in the Schools Program in Kentucky in 2002. "If we continue to grow at the current rate, NASP will impact a million youth per year, said Grimes. "And that's something to be proud of."



# The Friends of the Wisconsin Conservation Congress

By Edgar Harvey, Jr.

In the first addition of the Conservation Chronicle, we announced our intention to create a free standing corporation to raise and hold money which we might use for awards, contributions, etc.. Primary funding for the Congress is from license dollars. However, there are many purposes for which we cannot use these funds. We have always managed to scrape up a few dollars to fund donations to the Wisconsin Youth Expo, contributions to the memorial funds of delegates, or past delegates who pass away, the wall of fame, or awards for deserving individuals. This has generally relied on the generosity of our delegation, and has been clumsy, at best.

"The Friends of the Wisconsin Conservation Congress" was organized, and incorporated this past summer. Originally, it was thought that it would take the form of a

foundation. However, the word "foundation" implies a self perpetuating fund. The interest from foundations is often used to fund scholarships. While the friends group is free to establish a foundation, they are not restricted in how they raise or spend money. Their by-laws will require that any money spent must advance the purpose of the Congress.

So who are the Friends of the Conservation Congress? The three founding directors are John Edelblute, Washington County Delegate, Al Shook, Waukesha County and Ed Harvey, Sheboygan County. The by-laws have not yet been finalized. However, it appears that there will always be three directors. One will be the Chairman of the Congress. The other two will be appointed by the Executive Committee of the Congress, and confirmed by the Executive Council. Directors will likely have to be

Congress delegates. There is some interest in allowing past delegates to serve as directors of the Friends group. There is also some interest in requiring that directors be incumbent Executive Councilors. We would appreciate any input which you might have on any of these details. We hope to have a set of by-laws in place before the May convention.

The fact that there is now a "Friends of the Wisconsin Conservation Congress" creates some opportunities for the Congress. If delegates are interested in working to raise funds, and create a scholarship, we can do that. We will now be better able to fund our educational programs. If the delegation chooses to, we can expand the work that we have done through things like wall of fame. It is a new tool that is available to us. Let's try to do something creative with it.



## Delegate Profile...Mike Reiter

By Lee Fahrney, Vice-Chair, WCC Outdoor Heritage Committee

If Mike Reiter were to tell you he has retired, would you believe him? While it is true that Mike completed a 35-year career at 3M in 2005, no one is suggesting he's been put out to pasture just yet.

Whether presenting a talk on wildlife biology to a group of schoolchildren, conducting a meeting of the WCC Trout Committee or scouring a flea market for a vintage duck decoy, Mike is more active than a three-

legged frog on a four-lane highway.

And much of his busier-than-ever schedule relates to his involvement with the Wisconsin Conservation Congress and other outdoor organizations. A delegate to the Congress from St. Croix County since 1981, Mike also serves on the Alternative Funding (Secretary) Committee. Previously, Mike also served on the Forestry and Parks and the Environmental Practices (Secretary) Committees.

Mike considers his service as Chair of the Trout Committee as the high point of his Congress involvement. "The Trout Committee had the opportunity to make a difference in cold water resource management," he asserts. "Many of my committee members are long term, and we consider ourselves a family."

He enjoyed delving into other Conservation Congress accomplishments over the years as he compiled a history of the organization for its 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary last year. "It became clear that the Conservation Congress has evolved with time to directly address issues as they came up in a decisive fashion," he said. "The Congress has been proactive and not reactive to face head on anything affecting conservation and our natural resources."

Mike's communications skills have

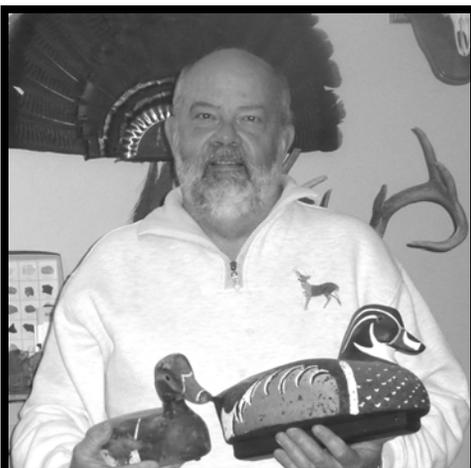
served the outdoor community well in many other ways. His newspaper column, "Outdoor Happenings," appears in the New Richmond News, and he writes or has written newsletters for several conservation organizations including the St. Croix County Alliance of Sportsman's Clubs, Willow River Rod & Gun Club, Star Prairie Land Preservation Trust and the Star Prairie Fish & Game Association.

What does the future hold for the Conservation Congress? Deer season controversy, baiting and feeding, land access and weapons usage (crossbow, archery and firearm) are only a few of the divisive issues facing the Congress, according to Mike.

However, the most pressing issue, he says, is a dedicated funding source. He looks to the Minnesota model (constitutional amendment) as having potential for Wisconsin.

"We need across-the-board funding and have everyone pay for the maintenance and enhancement of our natural resources. The hunters and fishers of our state have shouldered this burden far too long," he concludes.

Knowing Mike Reiter, he will be at the forefront of that discussion, serving the cause of natural resource management to the best of his ability.



Mike Reiter pictured here in his New Richmond home with a couple pieces from his prized vintage wood carved duck decoy collection.

# Investment in Wisconsin's Fishing Legacy

By Rachel Piacenza, Wisconsin DNR Fisheries

Who took you fishing? A parent? A friend? We often hear that some people don't fish because no one has asked them. In fact, more than 24 million Americans say that they'd go fishing if someone helped them get started. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources' Fisheries Management Program is engaged in a nationwide effort to ensure the future of our fishing heritage. This effort is called Anglers' Legacy. Industry manufacturers, retailers, and 33 states are working together to promote fishing and bring new folks into the sport we all love.

More than 200,000 anglers nationwide have already committed themselves to take someone new fishing through the Anglers' Legacy program. Anglers' Legacy is an invitation from avid anglers like you who pledge to take someone fishing.

There are no fees, no meetings; this is not a club. Anglers' Legacy is simply about making a promise to introduce somebody

NEW to fishing. As you "take the pledge" you join people from across the nation who, like you, are giving back. You become an "ambassador."

The WDNR has been involved in this nationwide initiative since 2008 and we've made some progress. Unfortunately, Wisconsin ranks 3rd on that list. Utah, a state with little water came in first and Minnesota, our arch rival beat us out of second place.

**We need to change that, and you can help.**



If you care about the future of this sport, then commit and take at least one new person fishing this winter or next spring.

You're going fishing anyway - bring along a companion! Show them what you already know about having fun on the water. It's a great opportunity to build relationships with family, friends & colleagues. You may already have somebody in mind who you'd

like to take. If you don't, here are some options:

- ⇒ Take a friend who has never fished
- ⇒ Take a colleague who hasn't fished in a long time
- ⇒ Take a kid fishing, and have them bring their brother or sister.

If just 10% of current anglers each took one adult fishing, we'd generate 140,000 new license buyers and \$4 million in revenue,

easily avoiding a fee increase. License sales for 2009 are up 3% and that's good news. We now want to ensure that those 3% keep coming back.

The Anglers' Legacy program is sponsored by the Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation.

For more information & to "take the pledge" please visit:

[http://www.takemefishing.org/  
community/anglers-legacy/take-  
the-pledge/promo/WIDNR](http://www.takemefishing.org/community/anglers-legacy/take-the-pledge/promo/WIDNR)



## Not good-bye...just see you later

By Kurt Thiede, WCC Liaison, WDNR

Three and a half years ago I competed for the opportunity to serve as the DNR's liaison to arguably the last bastion of genuine grass-roots democracy left in the United States. I have been fortunate to serve in that capacity since 2006. During this time we have accomplished much together. We have celebrated a diamond anniversary. We have launched new outreach efforts; including this newsletter. And, in my opinion have helped solidify the Congress as the unifying voice of conservation in the state.

Besides these and countless other accomplishments, what I will take with me and hold most dear are the perspectives and friendships. You have provided me with new ways of looking at age old problems, you have challenged me to look at and re-

resent issues from different points of view, and to ask the extra questions. We have had intense debates, fought tough battles and have been able to celebrate many successes.

In addition, you have been there for me and my family while we dealt with challenging times. You have confided in me as a friend, and we have laughed and shared stories of trips afield.

Soon however I will be passing the baton and the privilege to serve you onto another. I am certain they will value this responsibility as I have, and as others who have held this position before me. I have been given another opportunity, another challenge that I hope in the long term will help me to be the type of leader you want in your natural resources agency.

What I will take with me to that job, and to any other position that I may hold in this agency, is the common sense, integrity, accountability and dedication that I've learned from you. I have never met a more dedicated and passionate group.

You will still see me around, just not in the same role, but I hope you will continue to share with me your perspectives, thoughts and insights, as well as your stories, jokes and concerns.

Again, thank you for your trust, hard work and commitment to the future of conservation. I will continue to be a vocal supporter of the Congress regardless of where I may go. It has been an absolute honor to work along side you.



# Spring Hearing Advisory Questions...Continued from Page 1.

Spring Hearings will begin by asking anglers and bird watchers their opinion on the use of lead fishing tackle small enough to be ingested by loons, ducks and other waterbirds.

According to the question's background, the resolution is designed to reduce the incidence of lead poisoning (Lead Toxicosis) in waterbirds, shorebirds and secondary poisoning of raptors, such as eagles and ospreys by reducing the amount of lead added to Wisconsin waters due to lost fishing tackle. Studies have shown wildlife are most likely to ingest fishing tackle measuring: less than 2.5 cm (1 inch) length and 25g (1 ounce) in weight, removing lead in fishing tackle of this size would be the most effective way of protecting wildlife.

The next series of questions pertain to bear hunting. These five questions are representative of legislation currently in the legislature.

"Should legislation pass prior to the Spring Hearings, these questions may be unnecessary, explains Rich Kirchmeyer, WCC Secretary. "However, if the legislation is not passed or is delayed, these questions may keep the ideas alive and provide the bear hunters in this state the opportunity to weigh in on these proposals individually."

The Big Game Committee also advances five proposals to the questionnaire. Deer goals, unit boundaries and who should be responsible for expenses associated with deer farm inspections and escapes are covered in their questions. However, it is their final question that may generate the most interest.

*Would you support the concept of implementing an antler restriction during all deer seasons, in your County, on a trial basis?*

"We are going to be looking closely at which counties indicate their support for the antler restriction question," stated Al Phelan, Co-Chair of the WCC Big Game Committee. "Our committee chose to be vague on details, and not delineate a specific area or unit. This will give the WCC and the DNR some sideboards for advancing this discussion."

Trappers will have a series of questions that range from applications requirements

for fisher and otter, to closing the Spring beaver season.

According to the question background, fewer beaver ponds are being observed on public land. The loss of beaver ponds directly and negatively impacts habitat and waterfowl and wildlife populations. Therefore, trappers have suggested that until beaver populations rebound, spring beaver trapping should be prohibited.

"As trappers and conservationists, we felt that we needed to step forward and offer a solution to the recent problem of lower beaver populations," stated Scott Zimmerman, WCC Fur Harvest Committee Chairman.

The WCC Legislative Committee will once again be asking the public to register their opinion on a Natural Resources Board appointed DNR secretary.

"We haven't asked the question since 2006," stated Chairman Harvey. "We anticipate the question will do as well this year as it has the previous three times the question has been asked. Combined, over the three previous times the question was asked, it passed with a 95% approval rating. The message that the public has sent to the Conservation Congress has been clear, unwavering, and unending. They want a NRB appointed Secretary."

"Secretary Frank should be commended for the work he has done, and this question is not intended to be a referendum on his performance," added Harvey. "Rather it is a statement that this is the way we do business in Wisconsin."

Whether or not the Governor's veto of a bill that would have returned the authority to the NRB will be revisited prior to the Spring Hearings is unknown.

Anglers will have a full compliment of questions to weigh in on this year as well. Whether a person prefers to wet the line for trout or muskie, or whether they frequent the big pond, the Mississippi, or an inland water, there is something for everyone.

"It's always hard to tell which proposals will be the most discussed and debated," said WCC Coordinator Kari Lee-Zimmermann. "Looking at the entire collection of questions, and based on the calls we receive, I would guess that the proposal to lower the age at which a bow hunter can choose to use a crossbow without a special permit may generate the most debate."

The advisory question, which originated as a citizen proposal, and was passed in Waupaca County in 2009 asks, "Would you support a statutory change that would allow hunters 55 years of age to use a crossbow for hunting without the need to obtain medical proof of a disability?"

These thirty-eight advisory questions are what remains of 203 citizen proposals that were introduced at last year's Spring Hearing. To find the hearing in your County, or to read all of the proposed WCC advisory questions, please visit [dnr.wi.gov](http://dnr.wi.gov) and search for "Spring Hearings".

Make sure to get out and register your opinion on these proposals as well as the department's rule change proposals on Monday, April 12, 2010. All hearings begin at 7 p.m. Locations can be found on the WCC website in early February.



Callie Aulik, granddaughter of WCC Langlade County delegate Jerry Aulik, age 10, and her beautiful 252 lb. black bear harvested this past year with a tag transferred to her by her proud grandfather, Jerry.

# Wisconsin Conservation Congress 2010 Annual Recognition Awards

***It is time to nominate the Statewide Conservation Organization,  
Local Conservation Club and Conservation Educator of the Year!***

## **Conservation Educator of the Year Award**

Do you know a Wisconsin teacher, sports-person or youth group leader who is active in promoting and teaching conservation education, ethics, safety or outdoor skills?

The Wisconsin Conservation Congress would like to request your assistance or the assistance of your organization in nominating an outstanding educator for his/her efforts regarding conservation education.

The "Conservation Educator of the Year Award" is intended to recognize Wisconsin conservationists who dedicate themselves to educating others about the wise use and conservation of Wisconsin's natural resources and environment. Through this award the Conservation Congress will recognize the many hours of service, the number of individuals who have been impacted and the numerous programs which have been developed by Wisconsin's conservation educators.



Dave Tupa accepts the WCC's 2009 Educator of the Year Award. He is an instructor at Gibraltar High School.

## **Statewide Conservation Organization of the Year Award**

Do you know a statewide conservation organization that has been active in promoting conservation and conservation education activities and projects throughout the state?

The Wisconsin Conservation Congress would like to request your assistance or the assistance of your organization in nominating a statewide conservation organization for their efforts regarding conservation and conservation education activities and projects throughout the state.

The "Statewide Conservation Organization of the Year Award" is intended to recognize Wisconsin organization who has dedicated themselves to conservation and conservation education activities and projects throughout the state to include habitat development, youth fishing clinics, scholarships, access points, hunter education, etc. Through this award the Conservation Congress will recognize the many hours of service, the number of individuals who have been impacted and the numerous opportunities that have been developed by this organization.

## **Local Conservation Club of the Year Award**

Do you know a local conservation club that has been active in promoting conservation education and training, habitat enhancement, recreation activities, outdoor recreation access and non-conservation community service projects?

The Wisconsin Conservation Congress would like to request your assistance or the assistance of your organization in nominating an outstanding local conservation club for their efforts regarding conservation education and training, habitat enhancement, recreation activities, and non-conservation community service projects.

The "Local Conservation Club of the Year Award" is intended to recognize Wisconsin conservation clubs who dedicate themselves to conservation education and training, habitat enhancement, recreation activities, outdoor recreation access and non-conservation community service projects to help maintain Wisconsin's natural resources and environment. Through this award the Conservation Congress will recognize the many hours of service, the number of individuals who have been impacted and the numerous opportunities that have been developed by Wisconsin's local conservation clubs.



Conservation clubs and sportsmen and women throughout the state are asked to help this effort by nominating a deserving local conservation club in their area, a statewide organization or deserving educator for an award.

The Awards committee of the Wisconsin Conservation Congress will review nominations on Saturday, March 14, 2009 and the award will be presented at the annual Conservation Congress convention held in Lake Geneva on the evening of Friday, May 7, 2010.

For further information about this award, contact Frank Reith, Chair of the Awards committee at 715-248-3883 after 6:00 p.m..

Your nomination form must be postmarked no later than Friday, March 2, 2009, any nominations postmarked after March 2, 2009 will not be considered.



## 2010 Conservation Congress Recognition Award Nomination Form

Please describe efforts in the area of **Habitat Enhancement/Conservation** (*such as stream improvements, invasive species efforts*) :

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Please describe efforts in the area of **Recreational Activities / Projects / Fundraisers** (*such as fisheries, contests, auctions, disabled hunts, access piers or scholarships*) :

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Funds Raised in 2009: \_\_\_\_\_ Funds provided opportunities for:  Members Only  Non-Members  Both

Funds were utilized for :  Habitat  Education  Recreation  Other (Please Specify) \_\_\_\_\_

For Local Clubs, please provide details of local community service projects (*such as venison donation programs*) , & for Statewide Organizations, please provide details of activities that were statewide or regional in scope (*such as cooperative efforts with other organizations or government agencies*):

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**Deadline March 1, 2010**

# Delegates Out & About - Fall 2009



Both Mike Rogers and Gerry Stadler, Sauk County delegates, were successful on their moose hunt in Manitoba Canada in October. Mike and Gerry are pictured here with Gerry's bull.



Larry Bonde, Manitowoc County delegate, arrowed this nice buck in late October in Unit 69.



Kyle Kulow, St. Croix County delegate, and his two daughters Kylee Jo and Maddie with Kyle's buck that they helped him track on the night before Halloween.



Meade Grim, Green Lake County delegate, is shown here with his 11 year old son Trevor's first white-tailed deer taken with rifle during the youth/mentored hunt in October.



After an exhausting battle, Dave Tupa, Door County delegate, guided this 30+ inch steelhead to the rocky bank of the Brule River while fly-fishing this past fall.



The Chair's Bear. WCC Chairman, Ed Harvey, Sheboygan County, harvested this Rusk County bruin in September.



Dan Lazzaroni, Forest County delegate, with his 49.5" musky caught on a Michigan - Wisconsin boundary water this past fall.



Wayne Towne, Menominee County delegate, harvested this nice buck with his crossbow. It was his first archery deer in many years of hunting.

**Thanks to all of you who submitted photos. We simply couldn't fit them all in the allotted space. Please keep sending them in, we will use them in future Chronicles. It's a good reminder that there is life outside of meetings and hearings!!**

**Thanks for all you do!**



# Application for the Wisconsin Conservation Congress 2010 Youth Outdoor Education Expo Travel Grant

## *Transportation Grant Request*

The Wisconsin Conservation Congress provides transportation grants to school districts who wish to attend the Wisconsin Outdoor Education Expo held each year at the Dodge County fairgrounds in Beaver Dam, WI.

This otherwise free educational event features archery, firearm safety, fishing, trapping, live wildlife specimens, sporting dogs, trail recreation and, of course, the Wisconsin Conservation Congress Wall of Fame depicting beautifully represented artifacts of the state's outdoor heritage.

The Conservation Congress has five \$200 travel grants available to help get kids outdoor! These grants are designed to help the school district cover the cost of transportation to and from the Expo. First time attendees receive first priority for the grant. Other criteria include distance from the Expo site and expected cost to the school district.

Expo Dates in 2010 are May 13-14. Schools may attend either one of these dates. Go to [www.wisexpo.com](http://www.wisexpo.com) or call 1-877-wisexpo to learn more and to register for the event. *Note: Filling out this grant request does not register you for the event.*

Name of School: \_\_\_\_\_ County : \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: (     ) \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Attending (circle): May    13        14

Number of students attending: \_\_\_\_\_ Expected total cost to the school district: \_\_\_\_\_

Has your school previously attended the Wisconsin Youth Expo (circle):    YES    NO    If Yes, What year (s): \_\_\_\_\_

Other assistance being offered (e.g. your county's Conservation Congress delegation, or local conservation club):    YES    NO

If Yes, please describe: \_\_\_\_\_

Submit grant application by **April 16**. Applications received after that date will be considered if funds are still available. Any questions should be directed to Lee Fahrney, WCC Outdoor Heritage Committee Vice Chair at (608) 967-2208 or at [fiveoaks@mhtc.net](mailto:fiveoaks@mhtc.net).

Submit the completed application by **April 16** to:

**Conservation Congress Scholarship**

**C/O Lee Fahrney**

**7860 McKenna Road**

**Hollandale, WI 53544**

**Deadline April 16, 2010**

# An open letter to say...Thanks!

The following letter was sent to WCC Delegate David Miller, Washington County. The author, Mr. Waters, requested that it be shared with all Wisconsin Conservation Congress delegates.

December 12, 2009

## To Those Involved With Passing the Youth Hunter Mentoring Law,

Hunting has been a quality part of my life for 39 years. I've experienced firsthand most of the positive aspects hunting can bring to a family. In the woods, bonds are formed, mutual respect is gained, smiles are shared and Mother Nature puts on an amazing show!

My son Cal, is now 10 years old so obviously I followed the progression of lowering the legal hunting age here in Wisconsin. In my opinion, giving parents the right to teach their younger kids about safe and ethical hunting is the most sensible way to welcome our kids into the outdoors. Cal made it clear he wanted to hunt so he began sitting with me on my deer stand since he was 7 years old. Those times were so special and will be remembered forever.

Thanks to what all of you have done, Cal and I started preparing for the 2009 deer season with my son as the hunter. The preparation was fun as my wife and I took our son shopping for a new youth gun. We looked at many guns and eventually settled on purchasing a nicer gun Cal could hand down to his kids. We practiced several weekends shooting many rounds until Cal became very proficient at 50 to 100 yards.

October brought the youth hunt and Cal and I were ready. After his football game on a Saturday, we went north to deer hunt for a day and a half. We hunted from a ground blind for his first hunt rehearsing what to do if we saw deer. On Sunday afternoon, a doe found herself in my son's scope at 80 yards. He dropped her in her tracks. It was an absolute thrill for both of us, as we shared strong congratulatory hugs. We left the woods to get Mom (also a deer hunter) and came back for pictures.

Next on the calendar came the November gun deer hunt. I sat with Cal for opening day in a double ladder stand to see several deer but nothing to shoot at. On Saturday afternoon we heard my wife shoot and we celebrated her 6 pointer later that evening. She offered to bring her "good luck" to sit with Cal on Sunday morning in the double ladder stand. Cal agreed so I sat in a stand about 15 minutes away. After I heard close shots at about 7:45 a.m., my phone vibrated in my pocket. I answered, and Cal excitedly whispered through the phone, "I got one and it has a lot of points." I rushed to their stand and we recovered his beautiful 10 pointer he shot at about 75 yards. My wife said he handled the gun flawlessly and was very safe. We brought his buck back to camp and the smiles and celebration ensued. The memories, laughter, and the family experience will be cherished forever and my "youth hunter" is definitely hooked on hunting.

Our sincerest thanks to all of you who worked so hard to lower the legal hunting age in Wisconsin. It was indeed time to get parents more involved in the responsibility and opportunity to teach and interact with their kids in the woods!

Sincerely,

A Proud Dad of the Waters Family (Gary, Marybeth & Cal)



# 2009 Youth Hunters: Brett's Bear

By Kurt Thiede, DNR WCC Liaison

LINCOLN COUNTY - Family. That is the one word that may best describe the overall theme of Brett Dewitt's first bear hunt.

Brett, Buffalo County, like approximately three dozen other novice hunters submitted an essay and application for the Conservation Congress' one 2009 learn-to-bear-hunt tag.

While the selection committee could easily have awarded tags to all the applicants, three rose to the top, and the committee had the unenviable task of choosing just one. Fortunately, Doug Frank, a bear hunter from Washington County had a tag that would eventually give Brett an opportunity to participate in his first bear hunt.

Frank contacted the Congress Chairman Ed Harvey and indicated that he would like to transfer his bear tag to a first time bear hunter. Harvey knew the Congress had received a number of applicants for the learn-to-bear-hunt tag. He contacted Rich Kirchmeyer, Congress Bear Committee Chair, to see if one of the runners up might be worthy of Doug's tag.

DeWitt, a boy scout from Alma, had an interest in bears his entire childhood. He enjoyed fishing and had some exposure to deer and turkey hunting, but never bear hunting.

"Nobody in my family has hunted anything but deer and turkey," stated DeWitt in his essay. "I would like to bring a bear home and show them why I have always wanted to hunt for bear."

Brett not only got to hunt for bear, Mark and Tammy Loka exposed he and his entire family to the northern Wisconsin bear hunting experience.

"We invited them up before hunting season which included Brett, his dad, mom, and sister," recalled Tammy Loka. "Mark took the boys out running with the dogs during training season, to show them other ways we hunt than just sit in a stand."

"Our thought of the early invite was more for introduction so Brett and his family would get to know us," added Mark Loka.

"We didn't see much that day, but we talked for hours about it before we went to bed that evening," stated Mark. "The next day I took them to a few stands that I had prepped, to show them where they may be sitting during the hunt."

As hunting season approached, Brett's dad, grandpa and another family member came up with Brett for the hunt.

"Truly, we had the whole family," recalled Tammy. "We all had fun, and in the interim met new friends."

With his grandfather's gun in hand, he and his mentor Loka took to the woods.



Brett Dewitt, 13, of Alma Wisconsin, and his mentor Mark Loka, Conservation Congress delegate from Lincoln County with Brett's bear.

"Brett used his grandfather's gun that his grandpa as a child, brand new, for approximately \$15.00," noted Tammy. "His grandpa thought he needed this gun for the hunt. Brett was so proud of that gun."

Brett connected with his 140 pound bear using his grandfather's gun on Friday, September 18, 2009.

"Mark really enjoyed himself and I know it was quite an experience for Brett's family," concluded Tammy. "Mark and I felt that we were blessed to have gotten Brett. This is a great family that learned a lot and we feel Brett has a good outlook on hunting in the future!"



Jackson Humphries (second from left) harvested this bear with the help of his mentor Dave Mabie (far right), Congress delegate from Price county. Also pictured are Mabie's two boys Jeff and Nick, and his wife Kris.

## 2009 Wisconsin Conservation Congress Learn-to-Bear-Hunt Tag Recipient: *Jackson Humphries, Oconto County*

To the Wisconsin Conservation Congress:

Thank you for picking me for the "Learn to Hunt Bear Hunt" tag! I had a blast! I learned a lot of stuff about bear hunting – like watching their habits, keeping the bait renewed and much more. I was so excited to have the opportunity to shoot a bear that I got really nervous. The guys helping me actually dragged me through the woods to help me get in position faster once the dogs located the bear. My heart was beating really fast as I got closer to the spot where I was going to shoot. I got in position, I shot, and the bear fell. Wow! This was the closest I have ever been to a bear! What a great experience. Turkey hunting was great, but bear hunting was totally awesome!!!

Thanks again!

Jackson Humphreys





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## Wisconsin Conservation Congress Calendar

Please go to: [dnr.wi.gov/org/nrboard/  
 congress/calendar/](http://dnr.wi.gov/org/nrboard/congress/calendar/) for an up to date listing  
 of all Congress meetings and events.

**February**

24 NRB Meeting - Madison

**March**

2 WCC District 2 Spring Meeting  
 WCC District 7 Spring Meeting  
 WCC District 9 Spring Meeting  
 WCC District 10 Spring Meeting  
 WCC Districts 11/12 Spring  
 Meeting  
 4 WCC District 4 Spring Meeting  
 WCC District 5 Spring Meeting  
 8 WCC District 1 Spring Meeting  
 WCC District 8 Spring Meeting

13 WCC Awards Committee Mtg. -  
 Stevens Point  
 15 WCC District 3 Spring Meeting  
 WCC District 6 Spring Meeting  
 31 NRB Mtg. - Madison

**April**

8 - 11 Madison Deer and Turkey Expo.  
 - *The WCC Wall of Fame will be  
 present at this event.*  
 12 2010 WCC/DNR Spring  
 Hearings  
 26 WCC Rules & Resolutions  
 Committee - Stevens Point  
 28 NRB Mtg. - Madison

**May**

6 Executive Council Meeting -  
 Lake Geneva

7 - 8 Annual Conservation Congress  
 Convention - Lake Geneva  
 13-14 Wisconsin Outdoor Education  
 Expo - Beaver Dam  
 - *The WCC Wall of Fame will be  
 present at this event.*

25 Executive Council Meeting -  
 Southeastern Wisconsin  
 26 NRB Mtg. - Southeastern  
 Wisconsin

**June**

23 NRB Mtg. - TBD

**August**

5 - 7 National Trappers Association  
 Convention - Marshfield  
 - *The WCC Wall of Fame will be  
 present at this event.*  
 11 NRB Mtg. - TBD